

ARNOLD ARBORETUM

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A few late-flowering shrubs. As the summer advances the number of trees and shrubs in flower in the Arboretum rapidly diminishes and in the last week of June their number is not large. Some of the most interesting of them are

Rhododendron maximum, with its pink and white flowers an inch long, in dense sixteen- to fourteen-flowered umbels four or five inches in diameter and overtopped by the fully grown branches of the year developed from buds in the axils of leaves just below the inflorescence bud. This growth of the branches before the opening of the flower-buds occurs in most late flowering Rhododendrons and hiding, in part at least, the flowers obscures their beauty. *Rhododendron maximum*, nevertheless, is a handsome and useful plant, with leaves larger and handsomer than those of any other Rhododendron which is hardy in this climate. Rare at the north where it grows in cold deep swamps in a few isolated stations in Nova Scotia, Ontario and New England, it is very abundant on the Appalachian Mountains from Pennsylvania to Georgia, making great impenetrable thickets along all the mountain streams and occasionally growing to a height of thirty or forty feet and forming a trunk a foot in diameter. When cultivated this Rhododendron grows well in any soil which is not impregnated with lime; it will grow, too, in comparatively dense shade and when fully exposed to the sun. When exposed to the sun, however, it is often badly injured by the lacewing fly. Several hybrids between *R. maximum* and *R. catawbiense* hybrids have been raised. One of the earliest and the best known of these hybrids, *R. delicatissimum*, is a handsome plant with pink and white flowers which open two or three weeks before those of *R. maximum* and are not hidden by young branches. *Rhodo-*

dendron Wellsianum, another hybrid of the same parentage or perhaps a seedling with nearly white flowers opening from pale rose-colored buds, and marked by a conspicuous yellow blotch on the upper lobe of the corolla, is a handsome plant which was raised by Anthony Waterer at the Knaphill Nurseries; it has not always proved perfectly hardy, although this year it has bloomed well and rather later than *R. delicatissimum*. Hybrids of *R. maximum* with hybrids of *R. catawbiense* raised at Holm Lea by Charles Sander have handsome rose or rose pink flowers, but have often lost their flower-buds in severe winters.

Rhododendron minus, better known perhaps as *R. punctatum*, which has flowered unusually well this year, is still little known in American gardens. It is a plant of the southern Appalachian Piedmont region, and ascends on the Blue Ridge of the Carolinas to an altitude of at least three thousand feet. The small, pale, rose-colored flowers are produced in small clusters which, like those of *R. maximum*, are overtopped by the shoots of the year which begin to grow before the flower-buds open. This *Rhododendron* varies greatly in size, the largest plants growing at nearly the highest altitudes where individuals seven or eight feet high, and often forming in thickets, are not uncommon. Less attractive perhaps than *R. carolinianum*, with which it grows on the southern mountains, *R. minus* is well worth a place in the gardens of a region in which so few species of *Rhododendron* can be successfully grown as in Massachusetts. In northern Georgia there is a form of this plant (var. *Harbisonii*) with larger leaves and larger flowers in larger clusters which may be expected to make a handsome garden plant. It is not yet in cultivation.

Zenobia pulverulenta is flowering unusually early this year. A native of the coast of North Carolina, where it grows along the borders of swamps, this plant, which is one of the most beautiful shrubs of the American flora, is perfectly hardy in Massachusetts where it has flowered in the Arboretum for many years. *Zenobia* is related to the *Andromedas* and is chiefly distinguished by its open campanulate flowers and four-awned anthers. The leaves are deciduous, thickly covered with a glaucous bloom, and the ivory white flowers, which are about half an inch long and broad, are borne on slender arching stems and are arranged in axillary clusters forming terminal racemes from twelve to eighteen inches in length and arching from the upper part of the branches of the previous year. The form of *Zenobia* (var. *nitida*) with green leaves, that is destitute of the glaucous bloom, is a more common plant in North Carolina and is equally hardy in the Arboretum. *Zenobia* is occasionally seen in English gardens. Is there an American nursery in which this beautiful plant can be found?

Pieris (Lyonia) mariana is another late flowering *Andromeda*-like plant of the coast region of the eastern states from Rhode Island southward to Florida and Texas. Not as handsome as *Zenobia*, with green leaves and smaller white flowers in shorter erect clusters, this *Pieris* is well worth a place in the garden where it is not particular about soil and grows nearly as well in dry gravelly sand as in rich loam. It is one of the common plants on the sandy plains of Long Island.

Sambucus canadensis. As the flowers of the Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) begin to fade those of the Elder of the eastern states (*Sambucus canadensis*) begin to open. This, *Cornus amomum*, and *Rosa virginiana* (or *lucida*) are the last of the native shrubs to make a conspicuous display of flowers in the Arboretum. Plants of the Elder which have sprung up naturally along Bussey Brook are now in bloom, and flowering plants are conspicuous by the small ponds near the junction of the Meadow and Forest Hills Roads. Few native shrubs make a greater show than this Elder with its broad heads of white flowers and lustrous black fruits. In low half swampy ground close to the shore of Massachusetts the Elder and the wild Rose (*R. virginiana*) often grow and flower together, and it is hard to believe that a more beautiful arrangement of summer flowers can be made in New England. In the Shrub Collection there is a form with dull yellow fruit (var. *chlorocarpa*), one with the leaflets deeply divided into narrow segments (var. *acutifolia*), and one with the flower-clusters four or five times larger than those of the wild plant and such large, heavy clusters of fruit that the branches barely support them (var. *maxima*).

Spiraea Veitchii. This Chinese species, introduced by Wilson from western China, is the last of the white-flowered Spiraeas in the Arboretum collection to bloom and one of the handsomest plants of the genus. It is a shrub seven or eight feet high with numerous erect stems, remarkably slender for the stems of such a large plant, and gracefully arching branches which are covered from end to end with broad flower-clusters raised on erect stems. For this climate this *Spiraea* ranks with the very best plants introduced from China in recent years.

Cornus amomum. Attention is called again to the Silky Cornel because it is one of the best of all shrubs to plant in this climate near the banks of streams and ponds where a large mass of foliage to spread out over the surface of water is desired. Examples of this use of this shrub can now be seen at two of the small ponds near the end of the Meadow Road where this Cornel is now covered with flowers. These will be followed in autumn by bright blue fruit; in the winter the purple stems are attractive. The Silky Cornel is a good plant, too, to place in front of groups of trees and shrubs, but it must have room for the free growth of its wide-spreading branches, for when crowded by other plants the branches become erect, and all the character and beauty of the plant is lost. A space of not less than twenty feet in diameter is necessary for the development of a handsome plant of the Silky Cornel.

Cornus arnoldiana. This plant, evidently a natural hybrid between two American species, *Cornus obliqua* and *C. racemosa*, which appeared several years ago in the Arboretum, is a large shrub with erect stems and characters intermediate between those of its parents; flowering a little later than *C. racemosa*, it has been covered with flowers this year. The fruit, which is usually less abundant than the flowers, is white or bluish white. Interesting to students of plants, as are all natural hybrids, *Cornus arnoldiana* is not superior as a garden plant to *C. racemosa* except perhaps in its greater size.

Rosa mundi, or more properly *Rosa gallica* var. *versicolor*, is the semidouble Rose with petals irregularly striped with white and dark rose color which is occasionally found in old New England gardens where it is generally called the York and Lancaster Rose, as it is also usually called in England. It is a handsome and interesting plant which should find a place in collections of old-fashioned Roses, but it is not the real York and Lancaster Rose which is a variety of *Rosa damascena* (var. *versicolor*). The petals of this Rose are in the same flower entirely white, entirely red and sometimes half red or rose color and half white. Flowers with petals of the two colors are well shown in the pictures of this Rose published early in the last century. The York and Lancaster Rose appears to have become extremely rare in gardens even in English gardens, but it has flowered abundantly this year in the Arboretum. The confusion in regard to these two Roses is likely to be increased by the fact that although one of them is a variety of *R. damascena* and the other of *R. gallica* they both have the same varietal name *versicolor*.

The Apothecary Rose is one of the names which was formerly given to a form of *Rosa gallica*, variously known as var. *officinalis* and var. *provincialis*. It is a dwarf plant growing from twelve to eighteen inches tall and spreading freely by underground shoots, and as it is able to maintain itself in sod it is gradually spreading from gardens and becoming naturalized. The foliage is dark green and the large, partly double, red flowers are extremely fragrant. This Rose occurs in a few of the old gardens of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but is little known to rosarians of the present century. How long it has been in this country no one knows, although tradition makes the Huguenots responsible for its introduction. Formerly this Rose and other forms of *Rosa gallica* were cultivated in Europe on a large scale commercially to supply the petals which are slightly tonic and astringent, but were employed in medicine chiefly on account of their color and as a vehicle for the exhibition of more active medicines.

The last Viburnum of the season, *V. Canbyi*, is now in flower. It is the largest and handsomest of the blue-fruited species of eastern North America, with larger leaves and flower-clusters and larger fruit than those of the related species. In the Arboretum *Viburnum Canbyi* has grown into densely branched round-topped bushes from ten to twelve feet high and broad, and is one of the handsomest of the summer-flowering shrubs in the collection. Large specimens can be seen in front of the Administration Building and at different points along the drives.

The first Hypericum, *H. Buckleyi*, has already opened its flowers in the Shrub Collection. It is a rare plant found only on a few of the high mountains of North Carolina, but is perfectly at home in the Arboretum where it has been growing for many years. It forms a dense mat of slender branches less than a foot high, covered with small leaves and, usually early in July, with small bright yellow flowers. This *Hypericum* is an excellent plant for the rock garden and for a ground cover or the borders of shrubberies.